

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 451 101

SO 032 616

AUTHOR Hockman, Amber Noel
TITLE A Comparison of Social Studies Journal Writing in the Classroom with Social Studies Worksheets in the Classrooms.
PUB DATE 2000-07-00
NOTE 43p.; Master of Arts Action Research Project, Johnson Bible College.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses (040)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Action Research; Comparative Analysis; Grade 5; Intermediate Grades; *Journal Writing; *Scores; *Social Studies; Statistical Analysis; *Student Journals; *Worksheets
IDENTIFIERS Tennessee (East)

ABSTRACT

This study focused on the use of journal writing and worksheets in the area of social studies within a suburban elementary school. The study was designed to determine if there was a difference in children's social studies test scores when they completed journal activities or when they completed worksheets. Subjects were 36 Tennessee fifth-grade students ages 9-11, mostly middle-class Caucasians. Two classes of students each had the opportunity to keep journals and do worksheets for equal amounts of time during the study. Each class had the opportunity to complete two units with journals and two units with worksheets. After four days of journals or worksheets, the subjects were given a unit test which came from the publishing company of the social studies curriculum, Silver Burdett and Ginn. The statistical analysis focused on the mean scores of the students' tests after they worked with either activity. Since four complete units were taught, all of the unit test scores were combined to find the results. Individual units were not examined because interest was in the teaching as a whole and not on the separate units. In analysis of the data, there was no statistically significant difference between the test scores of the subjects after they kept journals than with the test scores of the subjects after they used the worksheets, and as a result, there was no effect on social studies learning because of the use of journal writing activities. Contains 3 tables and a 31-item bibliography. Appendices contain two letters, a journal and worksheet schedule, and journal activities. (BT)

A COMPARISON OF SOCIAL STUDIES JOURNAL WRITING IN THE CLASSROOM WITH SOCIAL STUDIES WORKSHEETS IN THE CLASSROOMS

An Action Research Project

Presented to

the Department of Teacher Education
of Johnson Bible College

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirement of the Degree

Master of Arts in

Holistic Education

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

A. Hockman

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

by

Amber Noel Hockman

July 2000

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- ☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- ☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ABSTRACT

The focus of this study was on the use of journal writing and worksheets in the area of social studies within an elementary suburban school. The researcher designed this study to determine if there was a difference in children's social studies test scores when they completed journaling activities or when they completed worksheets.

The subjects in the study were 5th grade students who attended a suburban elementary school. They ranged in age from nine to eleven, with age ten being the mean. They were mostly middle class, American-born Caucasians, but there were at least six students who lived in lower class homes and/or came from other countries. The students' economic status and/or heritage were not considered a necessary part of the research.

The students were grouped according to which social studies class they attended. Overall, the number of subjects in the study was thirty-six, fourteen students from one class and twenty-two students from another class.

Each group of students had the opportunity to journal and do worksheets for equal amounts of time during the study. For example, during the first unit taught, class one did journal activities for four days and then took a test. Class two completed worksheets for four days and then took a test. After the first unit was over, the class that had not journaled completed journaling activities for the first four days of the second unit. Also, the class who had journaled during the first unit completed worksheets during the second unit. This entire process was completed so that each class had the opportunity to complete two units with journaling and two units with worksheets. One type of test was used in this research study. After four days of journaling or worksheet activities, the

subjects were given a unit test. The unit test came from the publishing company of the social studies curriculum, Silver Burdett & Ginn.

The statistical analysis of this project focused on the mean scores of the students' tests after the students worked with either journaling activities or worksheets. Since four complete units were taught, all of the unit test scores were combined to find the results. The individual units were not examined because the researcher was interested in the teaching as a whole and not on the separate units.

In analyzing the data for this project, there was no statistically significant difference between the test scores of the subjects after they journaled than with the test scores of the subjects after they used worksheets. Since the test scores showed no statistically significant results, there was no effect on social studies learning due to the use of journal writing activities.

ABSTRACT

A COMPARISON OF SOCIAL STUDIES JOURNAL WRITING IN THE CLASSROOM WITH SOCIAL STUDIES WORKSHEETS IN THE CLASSROOMS

An Action Research Project

Presented to

the Department of Teacher Education

of Johnson Bible College

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirement of the Degree

Master of Arts in

Holistic Education

by

Amber Noel Hockman

July 2000

APPROVAL PAGE

This action research project by Amber Noel Hockman is accepted in its present form by the Department of Teacher Education at Johnson Bible College as satisfying the action research project requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Holistic Education.

Chairperson, Examining Committee

Member, Examining Committee

Member, Examining Committee

Member, Examining Committee

Date

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am first and foremost thankful to my heavenly Father who gave me the strength and wisdom to complete this project.

I also express my gratitude towards Yvonne Poppen, Michelle Tarricone, and the students who participated in this study.

My utmost appreciation goes to Marie Garrett for all of the research help she provided during this project.

A special thank you to my husband, Chris Hockman, and my parents, Ron and Martha Wheeler, for all of the love, patience, and support they have given me during this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
LIST OF TABLES	v
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Significance of the Problem	1
Statement of the Problem	1
Definition of Terms	2
Limitations	3
Assumptions	4
Hypothesis	4
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	5
Journal Writing in Various Academic Courses	5
Mind Mapping	11
Art Journaling	12
Creative Writing	14
Reflective Journaling	14
3. METHODS AND PROCEDURES	17
Selection of Subjects	17
Testing Procedures	17

	iv
Time on Task	18
Statistical Analysis	18
4. RESULTS	20
Analysis of the Data	20
Acceptance or Rejection of the Hypothesis	21
5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS	22
Summary of Research Study	22
Conclusions	22
Recommendations	23
BIBLIOGRAPHY	24
APPENDICES	28
A. Letter of Approval from Knox County Schools	29
B. Letter to Parents and Parental Approval Form.	20
C. Journaling and Worksheet Schedule.	31
D. Journaling Activities	32

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Comparison of Means of Worksheets and Journaling Scores	20
2. Journaling and Worksheet Schedule	31
3. Journaling Activities	32

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Problem

Current trends in elementary education have turned to journaling as a means to teach children. English and reading have included journaling activities for years. All ages of students have benefitted from the use of journal writing, from pre-school to adult age. In more recent years, a movement in education has encouraged teachers to use journal writing in other classes besides English and reading. In light of this movement, a study that uses journaling activities in social studies classes is important. Social studies may seem laborious and uninteresting for some students. Journal writing applied to the teaching of social studies could develop the students' pursuits of social studies. While conducting a study on the use of journal writing verses worksheets in social studies, a researcher could see if any significant improvement would be made in the subjects' test scores.

Statement of the Problem

The presented study tests whether or not journal writing helps children improve their social studies knowledge. By having students write a variety of journal entries, the researcher observed the changes made in the subjects' social studies test scores. The different types of journal writing included mind mapping, art journaling, creative writing, and reflective journaling. Since journal writing has become a popular method of teaching, this study may shed new light on the use of this activity in the classroom.

Definition of Terms

Art Journaling For the purpose of this study, this type of journaling activity involved the students drawing a picture of the information the researcher requests of them.

Creative Writing This term describes a procedure that involves the higher level thinking skill of creating a product with writing. Examples of what types of activities the students were asked to complete in this category included predicting the endings to certain historical events, pretending they are famous leaders, or rewriting the ending to a historical event.

Journaling For the purpose of this study, journaling is as an activity in which the students were asked to write or draw their thoughts on a piece of paper. The types of journaling activities the students used to communicate their thoughts were art journaling, creative writing, mind mapping, and reflective journaling.

Mind Mapping This journal activity involved the students creating a web that will help them brainstorm and organize their thoughts. The webs had a center circle that contained words that described the topic of the day. From this circle, the students drew other circles that connect to the center circle. These secondary circles contained information that related to the center circle. The process of creating other circles continued, with the end result being a web of ideas about the main topic.

Reflective Journaling This type of journal writing gave the students a chance to evaluate topics in social studies that were covered throughout the unit. Students had the opportunity through this activity to express their opinions and feelings.

Limitations

The subjects were already assigned to the class by the principal of the school. Since the principal has the job of creating the class size and distribution, the researcher had to work with the number and distribution given to her. Therefore, the researcher was unable to choose randomly the subjects of the study.

The social studies material was based on the social studies curriculum provided by the county's school system. Silver, Burdette, & Ginn publishes the school system's social studies curriculum. Each school system has the opportunity to choose its own social studies curriculum, leaving the researcher restricted to the county's choice. The units in which the researcher compared journaling activities to handout activities were: "Spanish Settlement in America," "English Settlement in America," "The New England Colonies," and "The Southern Colonies." The county also chooses the tests that the students are required to take in order to pass the social studies curriculum. These tests are also published by Silver, Burdette, and Ginn.

The time allowed for the study was short due to the amount of material that had to be covered in the county's chosen social studies curriculum. The particular curriculum the county chose covers geography skills plus all of American history. Since the county requires that all the social studies curriculum be covered in one year, the researcher was not allowed to teach each unit as thoroughly as she would have liked.

The students' differing levels of reading and writing abilities may have had an effect on the results of the study. The classes the researcher was given to work with contained a variety of skill levels ranging from a 2nd to 6th grade level.

The interest levels of the students in the areas of writing and social studies may have also had an effect on the results. Some of the students love to write, while others hate this activity. Some students love social studies, while others hate it.

Assumptions

The ability level of the subjects was distributed normally throughout the class. The students were representative of 5th graders in this school. The principal of the school tries to equally distribute the students in all the classes so that teachers are given equally distributed classes.

The researcher and the classroom teacher taught the units in the same manner. The fact that the researcher saw how the teacher conducts the class enabled the researcher to teach with the same methods as the regular classroom teacher.

The tests the subjects took have been proven to accurately test knowledge in the area of social studies. Curriculum companies take the time to test their products so their book tests should be reliable enough to use.

Hypothesis

There will be no difference in knowledge, as measured by a book test to the .05 level, between students who study social studies with journal writing and those students who study social studies using worksheets

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Journal Writing in Various Academic Courses

Teachers have used journaling in a variety of academic courses. They have also used a variety of journals, including personal journals, literature response journals, content area journals, double entry journals, inquiry journals, and writer's notebooks (Manning, p. 91-92). In language arts, teachers have used the technique of journaling for years. One study by Alexander and Budd had ninth grade students using journals during a study on the Holocaust. Throughout the unit, the students kept a journal "for reflection and [for] a source of dialogue" (Alexander, p. 1). For instance, the students wrote in their journals their own definition for the word "indifference" (Alexander, p. 1).

Another example of the use of journaling in the area of language arts involves English as a second language (ESL) students. Teachers have often struggled with building the writing confidence of these students. Reid explored this topic in an action-based research project. She tried to answer the following questions:

1. What effect will the use of dialogue journals in ESL class have on students who lack confidence in their writing ability; specifically, will these writers' conventional spelling and length of discourse increase over a span of one semester?
2. What effect will these dialogue journals have on the students' attitudes about writing; specifically, will these students express a more positive attitude toward writing after engaging in dialogue journaling for one semester? (Reid, p. 1).

Reid had the students keep a dialogue journal ("a written conversation in which a student and teacher communicate regularly...over a semester, school year, or course" [Reid, p. 1]) three times a week for 15 minutes during one semester. The group of students she

dealt with included 10 ESL sixth graders in an urban public school located in the Midwestern United States. Before the study began, Reid gave her students a 10-item survey that identified their feelings about writing. At the conclusion of her project, Reid's students showed more fluency and conventional spelling in their papers. The students' attitudes towards writing had also changed for the better. Reid's research indicates that journals seemed to help ESL students with their writing abilities and attitudes (Reid, pp. 2-3).

In addition to language arts, journal writing is more commonly discussed in other academic courses. Jurdak and Zein wanted to see if middle school students would experience achievement and have attitude changes towards math through the use of journaling. The 104 children selected for the study were between the ages of 11 and 13 and attended the International College in Beirut, Lebanon, where English or French was the spoken language. The students were divided into two groups: the journal writing (JW) group and the no-journal-writing (NJW) group. For a period of 12 weeks, the JW group and the NJW group were taught the same math lessons. However, the JW group spent the last 7-10 minutes of class doing an instructor led journaling activity, while the NLW group spent the last 7-10 minutes of class doing math exercises (Jurdak, pp. 1-2).

In order to test the subjects, the researchers used the Mathematical Evaluation Test (MET). This test measures conceptual understanding, procedural knowledge, problem-solving, and mathematical communication. To test for an attitude change in the subjects, an *Attitude Towards Mathematical Questionnaire* was given to the students before and after the study was done. For three parts of the MET (conceptual understanding, procedural knowledge, and mathematical communication), the scores of

the JW group was significantly higher than the NJW group. However, the last part of the test (problem solving) showed no significant difference in the scores of the JW and NJW groups. The results of the attitude survey demonstrated that the negative attitudes towards math were not improved. Therefore, even though journaling may not improve the attitude of students, writing can positively affect the learning patterns for students in the area of mathematics (Jurdak, pp. 3-7).

Taylor wrote a proposal claiming the significance of writing in the area of mathematics. Since the fourth goal of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) is for students to learn to communicate mathematically, she feels that students should “be given opportunities to use all communication vehicles available” (Taylor, p. abstract). Journals are such a vehicle. Writing is a tool that lends itself to all subject areas. This activity “increases learning and as such must not be limited to the language arts classroom” (Taylor, p. 1). Ways that Taylor proposes that journals could be used in math include “focused or unfocused diary-like entries; teacher-directed reflections on specific lessons, concepts, or problems;” (p. 2) and vocabulary listing.

Taylor’s reasons for feeling so strongly about journal writing in mathematics include:

1. Writing gives students a vehicle to sort out and clarify their thoughts,
2. Standardized and other math tests require that students know how to read and write,
3. Writing lets students discover and pinpoint their problems with math concepts,
4. Students learn to use math vocabulary to describe concepts and express mathematical problems,

5. Writing “legitimizes the content of the curriculum and gives students a reason for getting information” (p. 6),
6. Writing forces students to learn a concept rather than remember a trick, and
7. Students’ writings can inform the teacher of the class’ progress (pp. 3-10).

Language arts teachers and math teachers have seen the significance of journal writing, but what about the teachers of the other school subjects? Educators in the fields of technology, physical education, and social studies have also used the technique of journaling in the classroom. In a technology study, Davidson and Maurer used journaling to increase students’ competency in word processing skills. They focused on five groups of first grade students. The students were to write the day’s date as well as three or four sentences for their teacher-prompted journal topic. There was to be an improvement in the children’s word processing skills as well as an improvement in their attitudes towards writing. Though these improvements were not confirmed through statistical analysis, the observations made by the researchers suggested improvement in word processing and attitudes towards writing. Through technology and journaling, the first graders became actively engaged in learning (Davidson, pp.1-2).

During a physical education study by Gregait, Johnson, and Nielsen, journaling was used as a way for students to self-assess their performance in gym class (Gregait et al., pp. 1-6). Both seventh grade and fifth grade students participated in this study. The seventh grade students attend a Junior High in which they switched classes for all subjects, including physical education. The physical education program at this Junior High focuses on team

sports, such as basketball and volleyball. The fifth graders in the study attend two different elementary schools that are comprised of about the same populations (Gregait, pp. 1-6).

During the study, the students were taught cooperative group strategies, how to use reflective journals, and how to set appropriate goals for themselves. The teachers also used rubrics to evaluate the students' participation in the self-evaluation process (Gregait, p. 21). The journaling part of this process lasted for six units, in which the subjects wrote in the journals once a week. They reflected on the day's activity and set future goals for themselves (Gregait, pp. 25-26). Surveys on how the students felt about self-evaluation during physical education were given before and after the study. The surveys showed that there was a significant improvement in the students' attitudes toward self-evaluation (Gregait, p. 30). The journals were found to be extremely effective. As the study progressed, the entries became longer and more deliberately written. The students enjoyed having a place to express their feelings about physical education activities they had participated in. The students were even curious when the journals were no longer used in the physical education program (Gregait, pp. 37-38).

Journal writing has also been used in social studies. Ellis conducted a study on the use of dialectic journals in a third grade social studies class. After a lesson was presented by the classroom teachers, the students wrote in their journals during a social studies unit entitled "Communities Need Each Other." They were to comment on the following statements in their journals: What I Learned, What it Means, What It Means to Me and My Family, and What It Means to the World. A new category was introduced every week. After

a time of brainstorming about journal topics for the category, the children would write an entry in groups of four or five students (Ellis, p. 1).

The results of Ellis' study included the students seeing the "Bigger Picture," reflecting on differences found in other communities, exploring the "What Ifs" for a topic, realizing the importance of goodwill between countries, and reflecting on the importance of cultural acceptance. During the interviews, the children expressed their feelings about dialectic journals. They enjoyed working with them. They found that the discussion and the writing down of their ideas enabled them to remember more of the social studies information. The students also enjoyed having a way to communicate with the teacher every week (Ellis, pp. 2-3).

Finally, Ellis discovered the teachers' feelings about the journals. She found them helpful when evaluating the students. Even though the journals took a great deal of time and commitment, the teacher thought the benefits of the journals far outweighed the time involved (Ellis, p. 3). By doing a qualitative study on the use of journaling in social studies, Ellis found the activity to be beneficial in the classroom.

Teachers do debate the significance of journal writing in any of the academic subjects. In a series of e-mails, Ohanian and Power decided to debate the topic of journaling. Ohanian took a stand against journaling while Power supported journal writing. Ohanian claims that children are not developmentally ready for journaling- it is an activity for adults. She also believes that children should not have their personal thoughts and feelings graded. Power gave rebuttal, saying Ohanian is limiting the definition of what a journal is. Journal writing is a time for a student to learn from his or her mistakes in the

writing process and to be challenged to be a better writer and thinker. The main difference between a student and an adult is that the student is still receiving a formal education (Ohanian, pp. 3-5).

Mind Mapping

Mind mapping can be used as a journaling activity. The British author Buzan created this concept from his study of the functions of the human brain. Since the right brain thinks in pictures and the left brain thinks in words, he decided to devise a method that enabled people to organize information visually and verbally (Buzan 1974, pp. 14-15). Mind maps are created “on unlined paper using color, symbols, picture, and key words” (Margulies, p. 8). This process allows a person to use his or her whole brain during the brainstorming and organizing of ideas (Margulies, pp. 1-8).

The practical uses for mind mapping are wide and varied. Buzan instructs adults on how the map can be used in the following areas of their lives: personal, family, educational, business and professional, and the future (Buzan 1990, pp. 175-283). During a National Public Health Partnership and VicHealth Conference, participants used the mind mapping technique to brainstorm solutions to problems such as global recession and emerging diseases (Critical, p. 1). Many business organizations are training their employees in the use of mind mapping through workshops offered by organizations like MindManager InfoCentre (Mind, p. 1).

Since mind mapping is becoming such an important training technique, children also need to be exposed to the methodology. Mind mapping is an ideal method to use with children. Children “explain their ideas best through speech and language” (Strategies, p.

13). Mapping allows them to freely contribute ideas as they form. Since this strategy is “useful in all areas of the curriculum” (Strategies, p. 13), it could be made easily into a journaling activity.

Mind maps enable students to do the following:

1. Become familiar with topics,
2. [Be encouraged towards] lateral thinking,
3. [Be interested] in a subject, even amongst the less able, and
4. [Display their work] in the classroom (Strategies, p. 17).

At Camp Invention in Akron, Ohio, students use mind mapping as a problem solving tool. This camp is a “one-week, hands-on science and creativity camp which [is] hosted for children entering grades two-six” (Collins and DeBerry, p. 46). During this week of camp, students participate in integrated, thematic Science units. In order to effectively solve the various science problems put before them, the students practice mind mapping to “integrate right and left brain processing styles” (Collins and DeBerry, p. 47). Mind mapping is a way to not only help creativity soar in science, it can also be used in social studies journaling.

Art Journaling

Art journaling is another journaling activity. Infamous journal writers, such as Leonardo da Vinci, have been called creators because of their sketching out of ideas for inventions in science and in art (Janesick, p. 514). Karen Ernst, an elementary school teacher, keeps a sketch journal every year in order to model the idea that “art and writing are

partners in literacy” (Ernst 1997, p. 1). Her school has adopted this statement as one of its philosophies.

Not only does she keep a sketch journal at school, she also records her vacations with pictures and words. While looking through her Alaska sketch journal, she began to wonder how drawing every day might be beneficial for her students. She therefore resolved to have her class keep their own sketch journals throughout the school year (Ernst 1998b, pp. 1-2). If the students keep the sketch journals, they will be more likely to make art part of their everyday lives (Ernst 1997, p. 77).

Ernst also finds that art journaling is a good way to help her students reflect. Towards the end of the school year, she has her students isolate themselves and look over their past journal entries. Then, after they have had a chance to review the pictures and words, they pick a favorite memory from the school year and re-create it. They can revisit this memory by drawing a picture, writing a poem, or choosing some other way to express their feelings (Ernst 1998, pp. 34-35). Ernst feels strongly that the purpose of the sketch journal for herself is “to observe the world, to write, to think, to make meaning and to re-read them to revise [her] teaching” (Ernst 1998, p. 35).

Copying pictures provides another way for students to use art journals as inspiration for writing. When learners re-create famous paintings, such as works done by Georgia O’Keefe, they will learn “techniques from the artist, get ideas for [their] own work and make connections to ideas for writing” (Ernst daSilva 2000a, p. 30). Also, just looking at these great works of art or picture books can guide students in their writing (Ernst daSilva 2000b,

p. 38). Observing and creating drawings seems to help learners with their writing abilities, including journal writing.

Creative Writing

Creative writing can also be used as a journaling activity. Creative writing can be defined in a number of ways. Some people claim creativity comes in “mysterious bursts of inspiration” (Lindskoog, p. 16). Maybury states that creative writing is “concerned with encouraging children to use what they have within themselves” (Percy, p. 1), such as their hopes, dreams, and heartaches. A high school student defines creative writing as “the expressive thoughts that flow from one’s mind onto the piece of paper” (Percy, p. 1). Though people have different views on creative writing, all of them seem to agree on one factor-- creative writing is a tool for self-expression (Percy, p. 3).

There are many ways to write creatively. Cheng investigates ten different ways to write: Standard Language, Personal Narrative, Descriptive, Dialogue, Labyrinth Style, Internal Monologue, Impact/Tempo, Stream of Consciousness, Balanced Structure, and Counterpoint (Cheng, pp. 1-5). Rainer claims that there are seven techniques for journal writing: lists, map of consciousness, guided imagery, altered point of view, unsent letters, dialogues, and portraits (Janesick, pp. 514-515). By examining the variety of styles of writing that are available, a person can easily write in his/her journal in a creative fashion.

Reflective Journaling

Reflective Journal writing is probably one of the most commonly used types of journaling. A variety of studies that use this type of writing can be found. One such study by Vojnovich investigates the possibility that reflective journaling can improve students’

motivation in the secondary classroom. Joliet High School teachers were surveyed about the motivation of their students, and the discovery was that transfer students had much more motivation to succeed in the classroom than the students who had grown up in the Joliet school system. Therefore, there was a need for this study (Vojnovich, p. 5).

The students participated in cooperative learning situations, reflective journal writing once a week for 15 minutes, and mental energizers that involved critical thinking (p. 20). By counting the number of bad conduct reports that were given before, during, and after the study, Vojnovich was able to determine the motivation level of the students. By the end of the study, the negative conduct reports were reduced from 27 to 15. This reduction demonstrates how reflective journaling can motivate students in school (pp. 31-32).

Another study conducted by Carter was completed through interviews, student surveys, and informal conversations with students in order to determine if journaling could help college teacher education students reflect on teaching techniques. Professor Carter had his students write in journals on a variety of topics throughout his class. He discovered that the majority of the students enjoyed the journaling activity and that it made them reflect upon the topics being taught in the class (Carter, pp. 1-5).

Using reflective journals involves students actually “reflecting on experience” (Taggart, p. 90). In classrooms such as Sunderman’s, reflective writing is an important part of the students’ learning. At the beginning of her *The Lord of the Flies* literature unit, Sunderman takes her class outside, giving them only the instructions, “Your plane has crashed on this island, and I am dead. You will have to survive on this island until someone finds you and rescues you” (Sunderman, p. 49). The students have to go

outside for the next four days and try to survive on the island. For homework after each of the four days, the students reflected in their journals about the time they spent in class. Because of the creativity of the unit, the students were eager to reflect on this experience (Sunderman, p. 50). Using reflective journaling in Social Studies could prove to be as valuable to the researcher as it was to Sunderman.

Chapter 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Selection of Subjects

The thirty-six subjects of this study were from two different classrooms, fourteen in one class and twenty-two in another. The subjects in this study ranged in age from nine to eleven, with age ten being the mean. Their intelligence level was assumed to be equally distributed. There were students with above average intelligence and students with below average intelligence. For the most part, their standardized test scores showed the students' intelligence levels were average to above average. There were mostly middle class, American-born Caucasians in the class, but there were at least six students who lived in lower class homes and/or were from other countries. The subjects attended a suburban Eastern Tennessee public school that contained 750 students, of which 16% received free lunch. The school's grade levels range from K- 5th grade. These subjects were all in the 5th grade.

Testing Procedures

The tests that were used were book tests. The publishing company of the Social Studies curriculum, Silver Burdett & Ginn, created tests for the end of each of the Social Studies chapters. Since four chapters were taught, four tests were used.

The subjects each had the opportunity to journal during the study. One class journaled for the first four days of the first unit taught by the researcher. On the fifth day of the unit they took a test. The other class did not journal during the first unit, but did worksheets instead. After the first unit was over, the class who had not journaled got to

journal for the first four days of the second unit taught by the researcher. During the second unit, the class who journaled first then worked with worksheets. This entire process was repeated so that each class had completed two units with journaling and two units with worksheets (see Appendix C).

Each of the days the students journaled involved a different type of journaling activity. On day one, the students did mind mapping. During day two, the students created a drawing in their journals. Creative writing was the method of journal writing on day three. Day four found the students reflecting in their journals upon the knowledge they had gained during the unit taught by the researcher (see Appendix D) .

In order to control the experiment, the students got to spend only the last ten minutes of the class time journaling or doing worksheets. They did not get to write any more or any less. They were required to work the entire ten minutes. The researcher made certain that the teaching time before the journal writing did not run too long. In order to motivate the subjects to do their best on the journals, the researcher graded the journal entries for effort.

Time on Task

The study occurred over a period of six weeks. This enabled the researcher to teach four Social Studies units, each lasting about seven days.

Statistical Analysis

In order to compare the outcomes of the unit tests, the researcher compared the four unit post-test scores. The students experienced two five-day periods of journal writing and two five-day periods of worksheets. Each of the two groups had this experience. All journaling scores were grouped together and all worksheet scores were grouped together.

The means of these two groups were compared with a t-test. There was a combination of two sets for one combined result in one t-test. The scores from the test in which the students used journal writing were compared to the scores of the tests in which the students did worksheets. There was thirty-six scores for journaling and thirty-six scores for worksheets.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

Analysis of the Data

The scores of all the unit tests were combined for the statistical analysis of this project since the researcher's hypothesis did not examine each unit separately. Thirty-six students were involved in the study. Since the students participated in the worksheet groups and the journaling groups twice, there were seventy-two sets of scores for the worksheet groups and seventy-two sets of scores for the journaling groups. Therefore, seventy-two sets of student test data were used in the analysis of the results.

The researcher needed to determine if the worksheet group and the journaling group were relatively equal, therefore a t-test was run to compare all the worksheet group test scores with the journaling group test scores. There was no statistically significant difference between the two groups (see TABLE 1).

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF MEANS OF WORKSHEETS AND JOURNALING GROUPS

Groups	N	Mean	Mean Difference	Std. Error of Means	t-ratio	Sig. 2-Tailed
Worksheets	72	85.08				
			-1.08	1.61	-.674	.502*
Journaling	72	86.17				

*Not Significant

Acceptance or Rejection of the Hypothesis

The study's data indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in Social Studies knowledge between children who used journal writing than those who used worksheets when tested at the .05 level of significance. The hypothesis was retained.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Research Study

The results of this study showed that there was no stastically significant difference in learning social studies using journal writing activities and learning social studies using worksheets. Even though there was a lack of statistical significance, the use of journaling during social studies appeared to increase many of the students' interest in the topic. This study also enabled the students to think on their own about the social studies topics, due to the nature of the journaling activities.

Conclusions

The results of this study will be of great benefit for those teachers who desire to encourage students in their writing endeavors. While the results were not statistically significant, the mean results of the study showed the journaling group average being 1.09 points higher than the worksheets group average. Due to this slight difference in averages, it is possible that a larger sample group would lead to results that were statistically significant.

The difference in mean scores could also be a result of the journal activities which centered around the creative process . The creative process encouraged the subjects to analyze the social studies material. This analysis apparently caused the students to become more aware of the material, making them slightly more apt to remember it. However, a greater sample of students would need to be tested in order to draw a firmer conclusion.

Recommendations

During the study, the researcher observed some areas which could be improved or changed for future studies. First, any future research needs to be conducted with a greater number of subjects. It is possible that the lack of statistical significance could be attributed to only thirty-six students being involved in the study.

A second part of the study that should be examined further is the time involved on each unit. The researcher was limited by the amount of time that could be spent on the unit. If the subjects were allowed more time for journaling, there might have been a greater difference in the results.

Even though there was a lack of statistical significance between the worksheets and journaling groups, the students benefited from the study. Not only were they encouraged to think on a higher level when they journaled, they were also given an opportunity to practice writing down their thoughts. One of the students learned through the study that she enjoyed writing and now keeps a writing journal of her own. Any type of educational activity that encourages students to pursue learning on their own is beneficial, despite its lack of statistical significance.

It is recommended that this study be replicated in other educational settings with subjects of different ages. The study's results may vary due to the suburban setting and the age of the students. To achieve the best results with this study, it needs to be tried with all levels and socio-economic groups of students. With a variety of students being studied, a more reliable conclusion could be made about learning with worksheets versus journal writing in social studies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

- Buzan, Tony. (1974). Use Both Sides of Your Brain. New York: Dutton.
- Buzan, Tony. (1990). The Mind Map Book. New York: Penguin Group.
- Ernst, Karen. (1997). A Teacher's Sketch Journal: Observations on Learning and Teaching. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Lindskoog, Kathryn. (1989). Creative Writing for People Who Can't Not Write. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Percy, Bernard. (1981). The Power of Creative Writing: A Handbook of Insights, Activities, and Information to Get Your Students Involved. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

PERIODICALS

- Collins, Paul and DeBerry, Patty. (1999). A Camp for Creativity. Teaching Pre K 8, 29 (April) 46-47.
- Davidson, George and Maurer, Matthew M. (1999). Technology, Children and the Power of the Heart. Phi Delta Kappan, 80 (February) 458-460.
- Ernst, Karen. (1997). Teacher's Sketch Journals. Teaching Pre K-8, 27 (February) 70-71.
- Ernst, Karen. (1998a). Looking Back to Move Ahead. Teaching Pre K-8, 28 (May) 34-35.
- Ernst, Karen. (1998b). Art Reflection. Teaching Pre K-8, 29 (October) 28-29.
- Ernst daSilva, Karen. (2000a). Learn by Copying. Teaching Pre K-8, 30 (January) 30-31.
- Ernst daSilva, Karen. (2000b). Inspirational Originals. Teaching Pre K-8, 30 (February) 38-39.
- Janesick, Valerie J. (1999). A Journal About Journal Writing as a Qualitative Research Technique: History, Issues and Reflections. Qualitative Inquiry, 5 (December) 505-524.

Jurdak, Murad and Zein, Rihad Abu. (1998). The Effect of Journal Writing On Achievement in and Attitudes Toward Mathematics. School Science and Mathematics, 98 (December) 412-419.

Manning, Maryann. (1999). Too Many Journals? Teaching Pre K-8, 30 (October) 89-92.

Ohanian, Susan and Power, Brenda. (1999). Sacred Cows: Questioning Assumptions in Elementary Writing Programs. Language Arts, 76 (249-257).

Reid, Lorene. Exploring the Ways That Dialogue Journaling Affects and Why Students Write: An Action Research Project. Teaching and Change, 5 (1997) 50-57.

Stuart, Alexa. (1997). Student-Centered Learning. Springhouse, 26 (September/October) 53-55.

Sunderman, Wendy L. (1999). Reading, Living, and Loving *Lord of the Flies*. English Journal, 89 (November) 49-54.

ERIC

Alexander, Jayne, and Budd, Kelly. Teaching the Holocaust in High School English. (ED410559). New Hampshire.

Carter, Charles W. The Use of Journals to Promote Reflection. (ED409305). Illinois.

Ellis, Monica. How Dialectic Journals Were Used and Conceptualized in a Third Grade Classroom. (ED408613).

Gregait, Lucinda; Johson, Diane A.; and Nielsen, Pamela S. Improving Evaluation of Student Participation in Physical Education Through Self- Assessment. (ED415222). Illinois.

Margulies, Nancey. Map It: Tools for Charting the Vast Territories of Your Mind. (ED406136). Arizona.

Strategies for Improving Language Across the Curriculum: Ideas and Activities for Every Classroom. (ED416471). London, England.

Taggart, Germaine, and Wilson, Alfred P. Promoting Reflective Thinking in Teachers: 44 Action Strategies. (ED422317). California.

Taylor, Pamela A. Using Writing Journals in the Mathematics Class. (ED415115). Mississippi.

Vojonovich, Christine M. IMPROVING Student Motivation in the Secondary Classroom Throgh the use of Critical Thinking Skills, Cooperative Learning Techniques, and Reflective Journaling. (ED411334). Illinois.

WORLD WIDE WEB

Cheng, Gary. (1998). A Style of Your Own: Investigating Ten Different Styles of Writing. Retrieved August 30, 1999.
<http://www.metajournals.com/resources/1998/08/03.html>

Critical Issues: Mind Mapping Exercise. Retrieved July 19, 2000.
<http://hna.ffh.vic.gov.au/nphp/envisph/critiss.htm>

Mind Mapping for Business. Retrieved July 19, 2000.
http://www.mindmanager.co.uk/course_mmfb.html

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Knox County Schools

Permission to Conduct Research

October 18, 1999

TO: Ms. Vicki Andrews, Principal, West Hills Elementary School

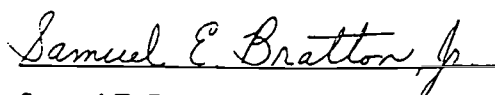
Subject of Research: Social studies instruction

Name of Researcher: Ms. Amber Hockman

Position: Graduate student, JBC

Supervisor/Associate (if applicable): Dr. Chris Templar

Ms. Amber Hockman has received permission to contact you concerning her research study entitled, "A Comparison of Social Studies Journal Writing in the Classroom with Social Studies Worksheets in the Classroom." Although this study has been approved at the central office level, it is our policy to allow the building-level administrator the right to accept or reject a given research project for his/her school or administrative unit. If you have questions or concerns about this project, telephone me at 594-1740. Thank you for your careful consideration of this study.



Samuel E. Bratton, Jr.
Coordinator of Research and Evaluation

Project No. 012

cc: Ms. LaNoka O. Rhodes, Coordinator of Elementary Schools
Ms. Amber Hockman

Appendix B

West Hills Elementary
409 Vanosdale Dr.
Knoxville, TN 37909
November 16, 1999

Dear Parent(s) and/or Guardians,

For the past two weeks, I have been working with your students in Social Studies class. My name is Amber Hockman, and I am Mrs. Poppen's intern for this year. She has turned over to me the responsibility of teaching both her students and Mrs. Tarricone's students in the area of Social Studies. We are presently learning about the various Native American tribes.

Starting November 29, I will begin conducting a research project with my Social Studies students. I desire to see if journaling activities or worksheets better prepare the students for a test. For two Social Studies Units, your child will do journal activities. For two other Units he/she will do worksheets instead of journaling. The instruction I will give them while they journal or do worksheets will be the same. They will also continue to receive guides to study for their tests.

I would like to be able to use the results of each child's test scores in my final report. The children's names and even their school will remain anonymous in my report. However, in order to use this information, I need to have parent/guardian permission. If you are or are not willing to let me use your child's anonymous scores in my report, please answer accordingly at the bottom on the page. Return your answer as soon as possible. I will keep you updated on the project's progress over the next few weeks.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at my home phone number, 251-7704, in the evenings before 10:00 pm. Thank you for your support!

Intern Teacher: _____
Mentor Teacher: _____
Principal: _____

Put a check by one of following blanks:

____ I do give my permission for my child's, _____, test scores to be used in Amber Hockman's research project report on "Using Journaling verses Handouts in Social Studies Class."

____ I do not give my permission for my child's, _____, test scores to be used in Amber Hockman's research project report on "Using Journaling verses Handouts in Social Studies Class."

Appendix C

JOURNALING AND WORKSHEET SCHEDULE

Unit	Journaling	Worksheets
One	Class One	Class Two
Two	Class Two	Class One
Three	Class One	Class Two
Four	Class Two	Class One

Appendix D

Journaling Activities

Unit One: "Spanish Settlement in America"	
Journal Type	Activity
Mind Map	Mind map the chapter's information on the Spanish Exploration (different explorers, what they did, why they came, etc.).
Art Journal	Draw a cartoon strip of Cortez's exploration.
Creative Writing	Pretend you are the explorer Ponce de Leon. Describe your feelings since as you try to locate the fountain of youth.
Reflective Journal	Give your opinion on the following question: "Were the Spanish correct in the way they treated the Native Americans? Why or why not?"
Unit Two: "English Settlement in America"	
Journal Type	Activity
Mind Map	Mind map the supplies you would need (including food, people, weapons, etc.) in order to lead a British exploration of the Americas.
Art Journal	Draw a picture of what might have happened to the colony of Jamestown.
Creative Writing	Pretend you are a British explorer. Describe your first encounter with the Americas.
Reflective Journal	Give your opinion on the following question: "Was it necessary for the English to come to America? Why or why not?"

Unit Three: "The New England Colonies"	
Journal Type	Activity
Mind Map	Mind map the creation of the New England colonies (who started them, why they were started, etc.).
Art Journal	Create a postcard that you could send back to your family in England. The front must have a scene from New England life depicted on it.
Creative Writing	Pretend you a New England child. Describe a normal day's schedule for you.
Reflective Journal	Explain the reasons why people came to live in New England.
Unit Four: "The Southern Colonies"	
Journal Type	Activity
Mind Map	Mind map the three different lifestyles located in the Southern colonies: Plantation owners, small farm owners, and slaves.
Art Journal	Draw a picture of what a plantation might have looked like in the Southern colonies.
Creative Writing	Pretend you are a slave or a slave owner. Write a diary entry about a day in your life.
Reflective Journal	Debate whether or not slavery was necessary for the Southern colonies existence.



U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
(OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



Reproduction Release

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: A Comparison of Social Studies Journal Writing in the Classroom with Social Studies Worksheets in the Classroom	
Author(s): Amber Hockman	
Corporate Source: Johnson Bible College	Publication Date: July 27, 2000

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Resources in Education (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign in the indicated space following.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents	The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents	The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents
PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)	PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)	PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
Level 1	Level 2A	Level 2B
Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g. electronic) and paper copy.	Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only	Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche, or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Signature: <i>Chamber Horkman</i>	Printed Name/Position/Title:	
Organization/Address:	Telephone:	Fax:
	E-mail Address:	Date:

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM: